

A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A TREE, originally commissioned as a one-act play, TEXAS by The Guthrie Theater, presents an off-beat version of that state.

Into an atmosphere so hot as to be hallucinatory drops a Boston career woman. She soon confronts Yesterday, a primitive builder and architect whose character militates against his artistic purity. He is assisted in his projects by an ex-marine made cretinous by Vietnam. Yesterday's present construction involves The Church of All, commissioned by an itinerant Pakistani preacher.

A relationship develops between the woman and Yesterday. It soon evolves to a power struggle, emotional, spiritual and physical.

Then a strange triangle ensues, the new player being Penton Marshfield, billionaire owner of the ranch where most of the action takes place. Both vulgar and generous, his spirit permeates the play, frequently in contrast to Yesterday's artist intentions.

All these conflicts lead to a bizarre and shocking conclusion which is, in its own way, religious.